

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SIL-01 LAB-04 OMB-01 /074 W

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R 170352Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7113

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMCONSUL MEMBOURNE

AMCONSUL SYNDEY

4UHQHQA/CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AS, PINT

SUBJECT: FRASER ASSUMER COMMAND

1. SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER FRASER IS MOVING QUICKLY TO CONSOLIDATE HIS NEW GOVERNMENT. HE AND LABOR MINISTER TONY STREET MET YESTERDAY WITH ACTU PRESIDENT BOB HAWKE TO DISCUSS INDUSTRIAL PROBLEMS, AND FRASER ANNOUNCED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD MEET UNIONS AND EMPLOYERS IN MELBOURNE NEXT MONTH IN AN EFFORT TO WIN INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION. THE FRASER GOVERNMENT ALSO INDICATED THAT IT MIGHT, AS A GESTURE TO THE UNIONS, RETHINK OR MODIFY ITS DECISION TO SCRAP THE PRICES JUSTIFICATION TRIBUNAL. FRASER HAS ALSO TAKEN STEPS TO CUT DOWN THE SIZE OF MINISTERIAL STAFFS AND THE NUMBER OF MINISTERIAL PRESS SECRETAIRES. IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT HE WILL NAME HIS NEW CABINET ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 22 END SUMMARY.

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2. FRASER'S MEETING WITH HAWKE AND THE CONCILIATORY STATEMENTS MADE BY HAWKE AND STREET AFTER THE MEETING WERE THE FIRST POSITIVE SIGNS THAT A REASONABLE WORKING RELATIONSHIP MAY DEVELOP BETWEEN THE FRASER GOVERNMENT AND THE UNIONS. A GOVERNMENT DECISION TO CONTINUE THE PRICE JUSTIFICATION TRIBUNAL WOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT CONCESSION TO THE TREAD UNION MOVEMENT.

3. WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT FRASER IS MOVING TO REDUCE THE SIZE OF MINISTERIAL STAFFS AND THE NUMBER OF MINISTERIAL PRESS SECRETARIES. HE SEEMS TO FEEL THAT LARGE PERSONAL STAFFS IMPEDE DECISIONS MAKING AND INCREASE THE LIKELIHOOD OF PRESS LEAKS. WE ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT FRASER PLANS TO SET UP A SMALL POOL OF PRESS SECRETARIES IN HIS OWN OFFICE IN AN EFFORT TO CONTROL THE FLOW OF INFORMATION TO THE PRESS.

4. FRASER ALSO PLANS TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES IN AN EFFORT TO KEEP COALITION BACKBENCHERS BUSY. IT IS ALSO CLEAR THAT HE INTENDS TO RELY MORE ON ADVICE FROM PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENTS.

5. FRASER REPORTEDLY WILL NAME A NEW CABINET OF TWENTY-FOUR MEMBERS ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 21.
PERCIVAL

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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06 JUL 2006

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